REVIEWS

The Archaeology of Kent to AD 800. Edited by John H. Williams. 288 pp. Colour and b/w illustrations, maps and figures throughout. Kent History Project series 2007. Hardback, £25. ISBN 978 0 85115 580 7.

This attractive book, a major addition to the signal Kent History Project, epitomises the comments of many reviewers, namely that nowadays no single scholar could efficiently embrace such a breadth, as did Ronald Jessup for example, when he published his prestigious *Archaeology of Kent* in 1930. Thus in this latest, essentially collective, work, John H. Williams, the Kent County Archaeologist, provides a brief Introduction which is followed by Timothy Champion's essay on the 'The Growth of Archaeology in Kent'; Frances Wenban-Smith is responsible for treating the 'Palaeolithic' while Timothy Champion returns detailing 'Prehistoric Kent' from the Mesolithic to Caesar's incursions; the hand of Martin Millet reveals the nuances of 'Roman Kent' while the splendours of 'Anglo-Saxon Kent' are covered by Martin Welch. The volume concludes with an efficient bibliography and a rather compact index. The nearly 300 pages of this amply illustrated book are excellent value at £25.00 for a present-day archaeological publication.

As a book, this publication is not without both surprises and even minor derangements of order. Its size is more or less what was termed American quarto, about 10 x 8½ inches, which makes for spacious well-arranged pages. Indeed, as one uses the book one finds the accurately printed pages a pleasure to read. However, it is disconcerting to find the insertion in various places of details of sites that have not as yet been definitively published. John Williams terms them 'grey literature' but in fairness it must be said that he tells us that all is in the Historic Environment Record and thus available for public access. Many years ago Sir Mortimer Wheeler, citing Pitt Rivers, said that 'all discovery dates from the time of the record of it, and not from the time of it being found in the soil'. This meant definitive publication, a principle which Wheeler and my own generation have never deviated from. Williams also tells us (p. 3) that 'Between four and five hundred pages of grey literature are currently being added to the Record each year'. The inherent danger, writ large in the scattered site summaries included in the chapters of *The Archaeology*

of Kent to AD 800 is that some archaeological practitioners will come to see the embodiment of their plans and notes in the County Record as sufficient and that the principles of definitive publication will fall by the wayside!

As a frank, and one hopes, helpful reviewer, it must be said that certain contributions, in specific areas, do not develop the full nature of that they record and discuss. At the outset John Williams devotes no more than sparse paragraphs to the geomorphological processes which have given us Kent and which should have been examined in greater depth and detail.

In his treatment of the growth of archaeology in Kent, Timothy Champion was able to wield a broad brush for, besides prehistory, Roman Kent and the age of the Anglo-Saxons. In broader terms, more could have been said about the J.P. Burke-Fox excavations, between the Wars, at Richborough while the influence of Shepherd Frere at Canterbury after 1945 was considerable. Incidentally, Frank Jenkins was a professional Post Office engineer and not a postmaster.

Francis Wenban-Smith's contribution on Palaeolithic archaeology contains much which is commendable and relevant to more than half a million years and which encompasses the emergence of the *hominus* species. There is also the question of the successive glaciations, the ice at one juncture lining roughly the course of the present Thames. Some 60,000 flint artefacts, for the most part handaxes, have probably been found in Kent, marking the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic while the principal sites are adroitly indicated and there is a useful discussion of what may well be our sparse Upper, Advanced, Palaeolithic material. The illustrations in this chapter are some of the best in the book but while 3.10-15 are apposite their over-simplicity clashes with the standard of the others. This distinguished writer could also have given greater emphasis to the fact that neither Kent, nor Britain, existed in a form that we would recognise today.

In what he terms 'Prehistoric Kent', Timothy Champion treats the years from the last glaciation to Roman times, our Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages, a period when the Bryony Coles' Dogger Land became more or less the North Sea and Kent assumed something of its present day form. The evidence for the Mesolithic mode of life is sparse in Kent. The arrival of the first farmers, presumably thought of as incomers, begins consideration of the Neolithic. This view can be challenged for the process may well have been that of indigenous evolution, although the accompanying, and presumably later, long barrows could be a pan-European movement. There are illustrations of the parts of causewayed enclosures at Eastchurch and Ramsgate, compared with Windmill Hill. Such an enclosure at Burham is at no great distance from the Medway's stone-built long barrows. The possibility of a cursus at Ramsgate has also been noted. Bronze Age Kent is marked by some 600-700 round

barrows, or the traces thereof, and the golden cup from Ringlemere may well show that Kent was a prestigious province because of its proximity to the European mainland. Indeed, Dover's boat, in calm conditions, could well have been capable of cross-sea voyages. The weight of later Bronze Age metal finds seems under-emphasised, except for illustration 4.30 while the Aylesford later Bronze Age gold from the Medway is well depicted (4.31). It is during the Iron Age that, at the hands of Caesar, in 54 and 55 BC, the *Cantii*, those of Kent, step upon the stage of history. One is glad to see the caution appended to the illustration (4.58) of the sumptuous Aylesford grave from Arthur Evans, while the Canterbury strap unit rivals, although corroded, the Bapchild terret . There are wise words about Quarry Wood, Loose, and Canterbury's post-Bigberry settlement. It is also noted that, one day, an Iron Age predecessor for the Thurnham Roman villa will be published. All in all Timothy Champion is well at home with the Iron Age and this section is the best in his rather sanitised, but in places quite gripping, contribution which concludes with a useful comment on coinage.

The intrusion from the grey literature of the Thurnham Roman villa (a piece of which the reviewer dug into in 1933) as does the Springhead section, worthy in themselves as notes, nonetheless detract from the smooth running prose deployed but Martin Millet. His illustrations (5.29; 5.30) of the splendours of Lullingstone, the remarkable Roman villa (5.28) are memorable while he has some practical comments regarding the end of Roman Britain.

Equally readable is the Martin Welch management of the historical-archaeological nuances of Anglo-Saxon Kent. As he observes with reference to walled Canterbury and Rochester, where dilapidated buildings of substance survived, one still wonders regarding their impact upon certain of the incomers from the deep-forested Germanic lands, remote from the Rhineland. The opulence of their burial accompaniments reminds us, as does Martin Welch, that royal barrows, as at Sutton Hoo, are conspicuous by their absence. All in all, we are piloted with skill and discernment through an era which has a para-history. The point of change was the conversion to Christianity of Aethelberht by Augustine and one should reflect that this was likely to have been an action which was a part of the reassertion of the Roman Empire, as is shown by his alacrity in building stone churches. The employment of a relief and river map has been particularly effective for the depiction of the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and settlements which, we are reminded at the outset of this particular essay, created the Kent known to many .

While certain parts of the this attractive book could fuel the jibes of certain university historians to the effect that archaeologists merely describe antiquities but rarely distil a view of the distant past from them, it is a brilliant introduction to the earlier archaeology of our county.

Although the present writer found the intrusion of sites not as yet definitively published slightly disconcerting, nonetheless their inclusion in chapters made for a gripping work that told one much that is apposite to specific interests. Thus we are perhaps fortunate that, even in summary, but with many pictures, so much has been put before us. All have, within their contributions, acquitted themselves well and one feels that for those seeking an overview of Kent it will be utilised for many years to come.

PAUL ASHBEE

Dungeness and Romney Marsh. Edited by A.J. Long, M.P. Waller and A.J. Plater. Oxbow Books (2007). 248 pp. Hardback, £30. From Oxbow Books, 10 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford OX1 2EW or The David Brown Book Company, PO Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779, USA. ISBN 978-1-84217-288.

This comprehensive and profound monograph, subtitled 'Barrier Dynamics and Marshland Evolution', with some 395 references and nine authors, 130 tables, reports on field and laboratory information both scientific and historical. It discusses and correlates this corpus of information to produce the most definitive history of how this remarkable area (dubbed the 'Sixth Continent') came into existence around 5,000 years ago in the late Holocene period by natural flux, over much of which time anthropogenic intervention played a small but increasing influence. The bulk of the recent fieldwork has been in the area around Rye and on the shingle beaches of the promontory but the compass of the volume extends from Fairlight to Hythe in the East, i.e. Denge, Walland and Romney marshes and to the Wealden land periphery.

Numerous natural influences are involved, from the origin of the Channel, tidal factors, salinity, changes in relative sea level, major storms for example in the thirteenth century and peat compaction. There are numerous illustrations, tables and plots. Techniques used included radio carbon dating, X-ray fluorescence, pollen, diatom, formanifera, particle size and elemental analyses, magnetic variation and, stated as the most fruitful, optically stimulated luminescence (OSL). Archaeological and Charter evidence are also cited.

The geographical picture advocated is of a roughly linear barrier evolving around 3000 BC between Fairlight and Hythe. Later in the thirteenth century BC, storms enlarged the open tidal inlets at Rye and, until c. AD 840, Hythe which did not exist before the seventh century AD, enabling them to develop as important harbours. Lesser havens came to exist at Lydd and from at least AD 741, Romney. After about AD 1000 these harbours slowly silted up having relatively short commercial lives ending *c.*1400-1600. It is considered that the Rother proper never flowed

to the sea through Romney. Rather the evidence suggests that it followed a course around Snargate, Brookland and south to Cheyne Court.

The construction of the Rumensea/Yoke sewer wall from Romney to the hills as early as AD 700 was a massive human intervention as land use pressure rose. The thirteenth-century excavation of the roughly parallel Rhee ditch was an unavailing effort to prevent the silting up at Romney. After AD 700, the ness developed, being sand overlaid by ballast, probably from the bed of the Channel ultimately derived from eroded chalk. The criss-crossing of the beach ridges is shown to demonstrate how dynamic and complex the local environment still is. As the infill progressed eastwards, the areas behind the coastal ridges dried up. This process was complete by 1400 but with the Rye inlet still open. First lichens and similar plants, then the *Fabaceae* family slowly colonised the bare stones. In the twentieth century the decline in sheep (and rabbits) has reduced the occurrence of *Rumex Acetosella* (Sheep's Sorell).

Pollen dating of pool muds, for example at the Muddymore Pit, AD 199 to 1400 showed a very high *Cannabis Sativa* count, which appears to be well associated with hemp retting for making ropes, nets and caulking, doubtless associated with the port at Lydd. Changes in pollen counts are also shown to date human intervention by grazing domesticated animals. Evidence is adduced which concludes that the Weald was never fully forested and the exploitation of Tilia (lime) later replaced by Fagus Sylvatica (beech) whose germination was favoured in the early Anglo-Saxon period by the disturbance due to animal grazing, especially by pigs. The cutting of peat for fuel at any period was only reported at Peasemarsh, doubtless because of the plentiful supply of wood. Salt extraction is reported in the Romano-British period at Scotney, Cockles Bridge from AD 1000 and at Romney in the eighth century.

Small scale tree clearances, for grain cultivation detected from the changes in pollen count, took place in the Neolithic to Bronze era (3000 to 1200 BC) but there is little evidence reported of permanent human habitation of the Marshes between the second century BC and the Anglo-Saxon period. Substantial pottery deposits are described across Romney Marsh proper. Two sherds of twelfth/thirteenth- and thirteenth/fourteenth-century pottery were identified in a core from Pett Level. An ominous increase in lead to 100ppm was found in upper soil levels.

The volume has been excellently produced at all stages. It is, however, odd that the word 'salt' is not indexed and the origin of the ancient and remarkable *Ilex* (Holly) (also not indexed) bushes on the shingle, now largely within the Military range at Lydd, on p. 186 is said to be natural before AD 800 and on p. 156 to be of human origin around AD 1000 for fodder and fuel. One disappointment is the absence of any reference to the two publications by Kent County Council in 1978 entitled Dungeness Draft Countryside Plan, 'Issues and Choices' and 'Report of Survey'.

There is also the report of the Denge Hydro-Geological Study by the Southern Water Authority (1984). The papers of Reynolds and Green (1986, 1991) and Basa (PH.D thesis, London, 1992) and Basa *et al.* (1997) would have been worthy of consideration.

These are but minor points in a survey of vast compass which will long remain definitive and, also, an example of how science and mathematics can transform objective historical research and understanding.

PETER DRAPER

Highstead near Chislet, Kent. Excavations 1975-1977. By Paul Bennett, Peter Couldrey and Nigel Macpherson-Grant. The Archaeology of Canterbury (New Series), vol. iv, 2007. 329 pp., 164 figures and 17 plates. Hard back, £25. ISBN 978 1 870545 11 2.

This is an important book in several ways. Sufficiently important that it deserves a review by a distinguished archaeologist with a deep knowledge of the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age and the Roman period. Instead, you have a review by someone with two very minor qualifications for the job. The first is a knowledge of the site, gained from living within half a mile of it ever since the excavation was mounted. The second is a long acquaintance, gained over many evenings in the pub just down the road from the site, with one of the three original stalwarts of the digging team. There are, of course, those who maintain that a deep knowledge of Shepherd Neame and its products in a qualification possessed by a number of Kent archaeologists. And what stalwarts they were. The core team of three, assisted by volunteers and youngsters provided by the Manpower Services Commission, worked right through the icy winter of 1975-76 and the baking hot summer that followed. Throughout the dig the aforementioned stalwart digger managed to survive despite his home being a small tent in the garden of the aforementioned pub.

The book now published records the rescue excavation of a site that was rapidly being destroyed by gravel extraction, and is to all intents and purposes, provided with its own internal review in the form of a 'Foreword' by no less an authority than Professor Barry Cunliffe. No apologies would seem to be required for direct quotations from that 'Foreword'. Professor Cunliffe describes the publication as a 'matter for celebration' and goes on to suggest that it provides a 'stark reminder of how hand-to-mouth archaeology was in the era before developer funding. What the small team managed to recover during those three punishing years was remarkable. More remarkable still has been the dogged determination of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust to see the project through to the completion of full academic publication. Highstead is a type site for settlement in the period and provides a pottery sequence

without parallel in the region which demonstrates not only the *longue durée* of ceramic technology development but also the mobility of ideas – and of course people – between the Continent and Britain. It is no exaggeration to say Highstead calls for a complete reassessment of the connectivity in the Channel-North Sea zone'. He praises the report for being 'unashamedly old-fashioned', 'designed to be used rather than to impress' and 'a delight to use'.

The book provides a report on the first major open-area excavation carried out by the (then) newly formed Canterbury Archaeological Trust. The dig revealed a site that had been occupied for long periods, certainly from about 900 to 400 BC and then, after a break, from about 100 BC to AD 250. The site potential had been revealed in a series of aerial photographs and these are usefully reproduced in the book. The possible strategic significance of the location is noted, given that it looks out over the whole extent of the Wantsum (sea) Channel from Reculver round to Richborough.

In the descriptions the occupation is effectively divided into eleven separate periods. These divisions are rather unequal and, at times, perhaps difficult for the non-specialist reader to follow. Nonetheless, the first sections of the book, occupying the first hundred pages, do give a very readable description of the features uncovered. These included enclosures, ditches, pits and post-holes, the signs of buildings and the evidence for local industry in the manufacture of salt, metalwork and pottery. There follows a section of no less than 150 pages which deals solely with the pottery. Whilst this unlikely to be easy bedtime material for the general reader, this is clearly not the intent. For the professional archaeologist and the pottery specialist, it will probably come to be seen as a vital work of reference for the period and the area, perhaps unlikely to be surpassed.

For the more general reader (such as your reviewer) it is the final section of the book that is, in a way, the more interesting. Here is described a fascinating range of other finds from worked flint tools, metalworking mould fragments, iron tools, artefacts associated with weaving and salt production and some quite enigmatic perforated clay slabs. Here also is the summary discussion pointing out why the site is so significant to our knowledge of the prehistoric occupation of the eastern end of the County.

So if you are a specialist or a professional you will probably need to acquire a copy of *Highstead* for your reference collection. If you have a more general interest in the ancient history of Kent or a more specific interest in the first millennium BC, you may also find the book a worthy purchase. If you are a resident of the Highstead area you won't need a copy – one has been deposited in the 'diggers dormitory' (the *Gate Inn* at Marshside) and can be borrowed from the innkeeper!

CHRIS POUT

Townwall Street, Dover. Excavations 1996. By Keith Parfitt, Barry Corke and John Cotter. 460 pp. 240 b/w figures and 79 tables. Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2006. Hardback £25. ISBN 1 870 545 05 2.

Dover is probably one of the world's best known port towns and it possesses a diverse archaeological and historical past to match. This report on the excavations of a 45 x 27m site on the landward side of Townwall Street, the principal access road to the Eastern Docks of Dover, adds considerably to our knowledge and understanding of the port during the medieval period.

Although the archaeological deposits were only excavated to the level of the intended building works, the site provided evidence of a building sequence going back to the late-twelfth century. Up to eight building plots were identified in Period 1 (pre *c.*1300), all providing homes for the families of the fishermen, sailors and dock workers of medieval Dover. Such structures are comparatively rare in the medieval urban archaeological record and add to the interest and importance of the report, particularly as the absence of waterlogging resulted in minimal survival. The Period 1 timber buildings were abandoned after 1300 and replaced by substantial stone structures in Period 2 (1300 to 1550). From the mid-sixteenth through to the late-eighteenth centuries (Period 3), occupation intensified. Most of these buildings were domestic, though one was industrial containing the remains of a malt-drying kiln, the first archaeological evidence for post-medieval industry in Dover and representative of perhaps the town's most well-attested industry historically after those directly associated with the sea.

Period 1 produced more than 28,000 sherds of pottery, considerably more than those recovered from all the features related to the later Periods. As a consequence the pottery analysis has concentrated on this assemblage, with only a brief overview of the later material. The bulk of the Period 1 material came from production sites in Kent, as would be expected given that the economic purchasing power of the inhabitants was limited. Nevertheless London and East Anglian wares were represented in the assemblage along with imports from northern France and the Low Countries. John Cotter's 133-page pottery report, though limited in its consideration of the later periods, would constitute a major contribution to the medieval archaeology of east Kent on its own. Combined with the structural evidence, the report on the Townwall Street excavations makes essential reading for anyone interested in medieval archaeology.

However, the importance of the report is further added to by the faunal remains of the fishing industry, with some 83,000 fish bones (mainly of herring) being identified. Evidence for the medieval fishing industry is rare and mainly comes from the larger urban centres like Southampton and Exeter. The Dover material, the first major collection from a Channel

port, compares most closely to the fish bone assemblage at Fuller's Hill, Great Yarmouth, implying similar fishing patterns.

Methodologically the report is an interesting example of how to approach the problem of dealing with a large and complex site with limited excavation and post-excavation resources. The approach taken to the mass of pottery is clearly laid out as are the reasons for taking it.

MIKE EDDY

Canterbury Cathedral Precincts, a Historical Survey. By Margaret Sparks. Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, 2007. 248 pp., 50 b/w illustrations and 19 maps and plans. Hardback, £20. ISBN 978 0 950 1392 0 3.

This survey of the buildings within the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral (excluding the cathedral) is divided chronologically into two sections: the monastic buildings and those of the New Foundation, including those of the King's School within the precincts. Using her extensive knowledge of the precincts based on many years of research Margaret Sparks leads her readers around the complex of buildings at Canterbury. So, for example, we learn that the new chamber constructed in the early thirteenth century between the Cellarer's Hall and the Guests' Lodging was called Paradise and the chamber above, built by William Woghope in the later fourteenth century was called Heaven. As she demonstrates, possibly the most important documentary source for any understanding of the monastic buildings is the fantastically detailed Waterworks Drawing made for Prior Wibert *c.*1165. This drawing not only provides indicators concerning the spatial relationship between the various monastic buildings in twelfth-century Canterbury, but gives ideas about their construction and external decoration. Other archival sources are also employed offering the reader a chance to appreciate the wealth of material that has survived the ravages of time which, in the hands of a skilled researcher, can yield considerable detail about how the buildings were constructed, the materials used, what they may have looked like internally and how they may have been used. At times, moreover, Sparks draws comparisons with other cathedral monasteries, thereby setting Canterbury's development in the wider context.

The second and longer section of the book considers the buildings after the Dissolution when the New Foundation was formally created in 1541. This section, too, uses the Waterworks Drawing and the mid nineteenth-century survey of Robert Willis. Willis was a mechanical engineer who could also use the early documentary sources and his published work was not superseded for many years. It seems likely that this survey will equally stand the test of time, its detailed description of the various buildings providing the reader with information about how the buildings developed

and the different occupants over the centuries. As a consequence the reader learns much about the development of the cathedral community and that of the King's School. For instance, when examining the King's School Dining Room Sparks divides its history into five sections, the first covering the building's history as the priory's brewhouse. In the early seventeenth century two of the seven bays in the house collapsed but this does not seem to have deterred its late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century residents, James Croft being the last canon to reside there. Like his predecessor he had servants, being a rich man who enhanced his position by marrying one of Archbishop Manners Sutton's daughters. However, he left the place in 1852, possibly to distance himself from the noisy schoolboys nearby, the house subsequently being divided in two and accommodating two minor canons. Further changes occurred in the twentieth century and, even though the building suffered bomb damage, it was rebuilt to accommodate the Dining Hall and other school rooms.

The book contains a considerable number of black and white illustrations, including photographs, which greatly enhance it as well as providing useful reference points for the reader. There are also several plans which similarly help the reader to orientate him/herself because at times it is difficult to follow. Even though the different buildings are not described using complex architectural terms, a simple glossary would have been useful, and if possible it would have been interesting to know more about the internal decoration and furnishings found there. Notwithstanding these minor criticisms, this is an extremely well-researched book and will provide a great deal to interest those who study the development of monasteries and their successor institutions. For the general reader, too, this book has much to offer and it seems likely that those visiting Canterbury Cathedral will find it a useful guide when they explore what remains of the monastic priory and its post-Dissolution successor.

SHEILA SWEETINBURGH

Gender and Petty Crime. By Karen Jones. Boydell, 2006. 256pp. Hardback, £50. ISBN 978 1 84383 216 4.

In considering 'How people thought about men's and women's misconduct' Dr Jones's book provides a significant contribution to the study of law and order in provincial society. In asking whether there were 'gendered or gender neutral offences' and in analysing the practices of both the local secular and ecclesiastical courts across the traditional period divide between the medieval and the early modern, Jones also significantly extends the study of crime in Kent, a field which has, to this reviewer's knowledge, been predominantly preoccupied with the study of the mechanisms of legal process at a county level and in a later period.

A range of urban records were consulted for Fordwich, Canterbury, Sandwich, Queenborough and New Romney in this study of petty crime. The chapters cover five key areas, offences against property, physical and verbal violence, sexual misbehaviour and gendered crimes. Jones asserts a 'heavily gendered' construction of misconduct in which women were predominantly convicted for verbal or sexual offences and men for physical violence. Interesting as well were her findings on crimes perpetrated by one sex or the other and her work reveals a series of gendered crimes such as bawdry, prostitution, infanticide, hedge breaking, scolding and witchcraft in which women predominated and sabbath breaking, gaming, vagabondage or 'idleness' which were the preserve of men. This 'gendered difference' is at its most compelling in the anomalies identified between the prosecution of men and women for similar crimes. Why was it that so few men were accused of petty thefts or as receivers of stolen goods, petty crimes for which women were disproportionately convicted? Why was it that men were doubtless involved in, but were rarely presented, for the verbal abuse of their social equals, a crime for which women frequently appeared and were specifically termed 'scolds' (a term which had no male equivalent). Why was minor physical violence an act only ascribed to men and not women?

In considering gender in relation to prosecution, Jones reveals discourses of masculinity and femininity that informed the construction of reputation. She describes the 'gendering of virtues' which stressed the values of competency and honesty in business for men and the importance of chastity for women. These perceptions of gender difference 'influenced what was reported to the courts and how it was reported'. The chapter on physical violence is particularly interesting in relation to this, in commenting on the very low instances of prosecutions for physical violence by women and by suggesting that cases may be being presented instead as scolding or defamation, Jones suggests that 'gender identities were so rigidly defined that men could not cope with the concept of women using violence'. This view was also apparent in didactic literature, which while 'full of injunctions to women to avoid disorderly speech has nothing to say about female violence'.

By engaging with the issue of gender difference, Jones demonstrates how the secular and ecclesiastical courts endeavoured, alongside the family, the church and the peer group, to enforce social control through gender roles. In so doing she raises complex questions about the ways in which perceptions of gender are formulated in society and the degree to which individuals respond deliberately and self-consciously to those expectations in the construction of their own identity. In considering the construction of masculine identity, for example, Jones highlights contradictory sets of values as 'Christian morality and the virtues of honour and self-control clashed with secular values which defined male status

and identity by physical aggression and sexual conquest'. The language of insult also suggests a definite engagement with aspects of the social expectation of the male with 'knave' or 'thief' challenging his social status and honesty. In discussing perceptions of femininity, Jones cautions that the idealised views of women emanating from the courts potentially conflicted with the complexity of their lived experience 'The woman who was expected to be quiet and obedient towards her husband and meek and unobtrusive in company needed to be assertive and forceful when buying or selling in the market or when disciplining servants'. In one respect then the rhetoric of gender difference asserted by the courts and evident in didactic literature, of itself limits discussion of the lived experience of women in particular, to observations about their submissive role in a patriarchal society. Significantly, this book demonstrates that how people thought about gender played a discernible role in the lived experience of those women and men brought to court.

Winner of the Women's History Network Book Prize, this book will appeal to both the academic and the general reader, to those with an interest in crime and in the history of Kent in particular. It will also appeal to those interested in the construction and cohesion of past communities and to those who recognise the perennial topicality of issues of gender, status and social control.

CLAIRE BARTRAM

Food in Early Modern England: Phases, Fads, Fashions. By Joan Thirsk. 396 pp. 13 b/w illustrations. Continuum, 2007. Hardback £30.00. ISBN 978 185285 538 3.

Whatever you may think you know about food in early modern England, this book will make you think again. The alliterative subtitle Phases, Fads, Fashions does not do justice to the many layers of expertise and enthusiasm which Joan Thirsk has brought together in just one thoroughly informed and readable book. Underpinning the whole is her sound interpretation of the 'phases' of the economic and social history of England and in particular the urban and agrarian regional differences. But this is also enhanced by the contextualisation of the knowledge and understanding of the role of food within the wider world, first continental Europe, but as the period progresses, the inclusion of the newly explored lands, together with the impact of wars and climatic changes.

In her conclusion she says 'Food is a slippery subject that resists the historian's urge to generalize'. She has resisted this urge magnificently. The basic chronological chapter structure of the book, that is the 'phases' of the title gives lie to the wealth of detail contained within. Thirsk has brought together her own lifelong love of food and cookery with

her meticulous research into almost everything she could find written about them. This can have been no easy task as, apart from dedicated herbals, recipe books and household accounts, on the whole food is not an immediately identifiable subject in archive catalogues, or obvious within published sources. But this has simply added to the richness of detail which can highlight the specific. For example, one Bartholomew Dowe, in the literary format of a dialogue with a Hampshire woman at the end of an anonymous book, *Household Philosophy*, passed on contemporary knowledge of dairying in Hampshire to Suffolk women, but has also given us an insight into the role of women in the dairying business in the late sixteenth century. A hundred years later the Jesuits were sending letters to England telling of a 'novel kind of plough' in China.

At the surface level the most noteworthy phenomenon is the variety of foods that were used in the early modern period. The diets were often as varied as those of 'foodies' today, and Joan Thirsk frequently draws comparison between then and now, noting that many foods and cooking methods have remained remarkably similar, although the old traditional English curd tart has been replaced by the twentieth-century European cheesecake. The lack of variety of food in the mid-twentieth century has probably distorted our understanding of what our predecessors four or five hundred years ago were enjoying. Grapes could be preserved in dry sand for winter uses, a succession of green and root vegetables were available throughout the winter, and there was often little distinction between garden and hedgerow as a source of salads and herbs. The range of meat and poultry commonly eaten was far broader with maximum use made of the plunder available in the wild as well as of gradually improving domesticated stock. The close connection between medicinal remedies and food was intrinsic to many of the publications, and the written evidence hints that most foodstuffs were of stronger taste than they are today, with those on Continental Europe even stronger.

At a deeper level, much of the discussion on food and recipes is governed by the fashions of the wealthy and the needs of the poor. In the first half of the seventeenth century the botanist John Parkinson noted that carnations ('clove gilly-flowers') were 'pickled between layers of sugar and covered in vinegar' for a winter salad for the rich, while at the other extreme, bad harvests led to local legislation that cereal grains should be used for bread not ale. It is to Thirsk's credit that although she admits that the majority of contemporary commentaries relate to the lives of the better-off, as a complete historian she has been able to elucidate the resources, diets and recipes of the poor as well.

The latter half of the book is a delight to dip into. Starting with a chapter on 'Regional and Social Patterns of Diet' that 'feasted on a varied amalgam of food prevailing in different regions and classes', she then takes us through a 'Closer Look at Some Foods', starting with bread and

meat, through dairy and vegetables to herbal drinks and sauces. Kent may come out well in many areas of food production, but apparently the 'worst cheese was said to be Kentish' in what appears to be an early version of modern league tables for cheese, with Cheshire naturally top of the list. Throughout the whole book the reader will light on contemporary rhymes and recipes, and many surprising familiar and unfamiliar foodstuffs; a glossary of some of the least familiar would have been a welcome addition. The illustrations bound in the traditional format in the centre of the book are well-chosen to tell the story at yet another level, but in some ways it is a pity more illustrations were not used throughout the text, but this would no doubt have increased the price, which as it stands makes this book exceptionally good value.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Steady the Buffs! A Regiment, a Region, and the Great War. By Mark Connelly. 267 pp., 7 illustrations, 24 maps. Oxford University Press, 2006. Hardback, £58.00. ISBN 0 19 927860 1.

For much of the First World War the inhabitants of east Kent could on certain days go outside their doors and hear the low, distant rumble of artillery fire from the Western Front. Indeed, in early July 1916 the guns of the Somme could be heard in the extreme west of the county. If the people of any county in England had reason to constantly consider what it was like for the 'boys in the trenches' then surely it was the citizens of Kent. Mark Connelly has got hold of a superb topic, and one that he handles with skill as he examines in great detail the role of the four battalions of the East Kent Regiment, the Buffs, who saw active service on the Western Front. His account takes the Buffs' performance in battle and places it squarely in the context of the burgeoning historiography on the changing tactics, command, conduct, and new technology of the war fought by the British Expeditionary Force and the subsequent conscript army after 1916. Kent is not ignored and he briefly discusses how the Buffs' experience impinged on the communities in the part of Kent from where many of the officers and men were drawn.

The Buffs were an ordinary regiment, not a 'showy' regiment but business-like with a strong sense of locality and family. In the course of the Great War, over 32,000 men passed through the ranks of the four battalions fighting on the Western Front. Inevitably an increasing number of recruits were drawn from areas other than east Kent, but a sense of local loyalty remained strong. In nine well-written chronological chapters Connelly surveys the Buffs' progress through the war years, from peace-time garrison duty (for some battalions in Ireland) to the rituals of post-war remembrance. Faced with the rigours of a European war, the morale

of the Regiment remained high helped by a fairly smooth transition from regular to new officers and good relations between officers and other ranks. There was much to shake morale in 1914-15. Besides the heavy casualties there was the lack of equipment for modern warfare, a problem not properly addressed until the British war economy got into its stride. The lowest point for the Buffs came during the period when the British Expeditionary Force was gearing up to face trench warfare. The battle of Loos in late September 1915 was a disaster for the Regiment. But as soldiers, many of them new volunteers, gradually learned to accommodate to trench warfare, and as new equipment became available (steel helmets saved lives), new strategies and tactics were developed. Haig's ideas of 'ceaseless attrition' and fostering an aggressive spirit in troops by raids on enemy trenches was, argues Connelly, in 'static positional warfare ... the only way to test and sharpen infantry skills'.

Trench warfare required constant learning and training. Soldiers were not permanently on the front line or involved in fighting. Away from the front considerable effort went into perfecting tactics for the next action. Connelly analyses the raids undertaken by each battalion, the time spent by the Buffs in training exercises, and also the number of days in which battalions were involved in action. Reverses led to new tactics and further training. The heavy loss of officers and other ranks in the dreadful Somme offensive of mid 1916 was due in part to a lack of joined-up command. It forced commanders to look afresh at the use of new technologies (tanks, for example) and the timing and strategy required in large scale operations that combined infantry and artillery.

With each chapter Connelly offers a succinct analysis of the political thinking that underlay the military strategy of the combatants. For example, his analysis of the political and military background to the German offensives in the first half of 1918 is splendidly drawn. In those months, Connelly argues, the Buffs performed well as the battalions, mostly seasoned troops, changed from offensive schemes to the lengthy and difficult tasks of building defensive positions. After June 1918 the three remaining Buffs battalions played a significant and costly role in the final battles that defeated Germany, a country already weakened by shortages and internal dissension.

Writing the history of battalion-size military actions in a campaign as extensive as that fought on the Western Front is not an easy task, involving recourse to flimsy war diaries, and the slow piecing together of different accounts of disputed actions. Too often the resulting detailed analysis of tactics and strategy can be a complex story, mind-numbing except to a small number of military *aficionados*. This book is different and sets very high standards. As Connelly concludes, the Buffs in a largely static conflict where artillery was a key element, trained hard to learn and apply new tactics and weapons, both of which changed during the course of the

war; and the initiative and leadership shown by officers and NCOs often proved vital as units had to function autonomously but as part of a large force. The final chapter in this splendid account is on 'Remembering', which examines the ways in which the Regiment met the acute needs of many soldiers after the war and the efforts made to ensure that the sacrifices of the Great War were not forgotten.

All careful readers look for more than authors offer. I would have liked to have seen discussion, even briefly, of religious belief among soldiers, of the military medical services, the impact of the influenza pandemic, and of the responses by Kent civilians to the progress of the war being fought so close to their homes. *Steady the Buffs* is a great commemoration of a Kent regiment. It provides a valuable additional contribution to the history of the Great War, and is also a book that could be used as a close guide for visitors to the battlefields of the Western Front.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

Seaside Story: Whitstable and Tankerton-on-Sea, a study in local history. By Geoffrey Pike. Whitstable Improvement Trust 2006, 94 pp. 27 b/w illustrations and 2 maps. Pamphlet, £4.95. No ISBN.

Readers familiar with Geoffrey Pike's earlier publications on the history of Whitstable will not be disappointed by his detailed research into the establishment and development of the seaside resorts of Whitstable and Tankerton-on-Sea. Those new to his work may be surprised at the level of detail he manages to provide on a wide range of subjects in a relatively short booklet.

The *Seaside Story* he tells is one of a community struggling to come to terms with the potential for income offered by the holidaymaker. It is also a community which demonstrated an enduring hostility to innovation, particularly innovation which involved spending money. Whilst a few enterprising eighteenth-century innkeepers were keen to capitalise on the fresh opportunities for trade offered by the newly invented bathing machine, it seems that the nineteenth-century natives of Whitstable were often reluctant to extend facilities for the holiday makers and day-trippers who visited the town with increasing regularity, preferring to rely on the declining shipbuilding industry. Engravings of the mid-Victorian seafront show tourists enjoying the beach alongside the smoking chimneys of the coke ovens and railway engine winder in the harbour. The development of the Tankerton Estate at the end of the nineteenth century paved the way for the development of Tankerton-on-Sea as a popular seaside resort in the early twentieth century.

In the process of exploring the development of the seaside the study also touches upon many other interesting issues; the development of the

bathing machine, the Victorian male predilection for nude swimming, the early railway, the charitable actions bringing children from the slums to the seaside for 'fresh air', the development of the beach hut, and the brief appearance of a local airfield, to name but a few.

The work focuses on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the brief survey of later twentieth-century developments that concludes the piece leaves the reader wanting to know more about the how the town responded to the changing demands of the modern holiday-maker. The story is told with ample quotations from the *Whitstable Times*; indeed as Mr Pike himself points out the study clearly 'illustrates the value of a local newspaper as a major source of information about the life of a community'. The piece is also well illustrated and draws upon other contemporary sources such as directories and personal reminiscence.

Published locally, the work would have benefited from the addition of page numbers and perhaps a more rigorous editorial process to iron out some of the inconsistencies in the footnotes and in the page layout. These minor technical issues aside the Kent Archaeological Society can consider its research grant from the Allen Grove History Fund well spent and the Whitstable Improvement Trust is also to be commended for its continuing support of local history research.

SANDRA DUNSTER

The Lost Manor of Ware. By Kathryn Kersey. 2007. 250 pp. B/w illustrations, maps and tables throughout. Paperback £17.00 (inc. p+p) from Kathryn Kersey, 5 Greensand Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 8NY. ISBN 978-0-9545831-3-2.

Historic Herne and Broomfield: an illustrated history of the village of Herne, including Broomfield and the surrounding area. Edited by Mike Bundock. Herne and Broomfield Local History Society and Pierhead Publications, 2007. 178 pp. B/w illustrations, maps and tables throughout. Paperback, £9.95 from Pierhead Publications Ltd, PO Box 145, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 8GY, email: sales@pierheadpublications.co.uk; Tel: 01227 370971. ISBN 978-1-904661-7.

The comprehensive study of the lost manor of Ware was undertaken with financial assistance from the Society's Allen Grove Local History Fund, and takes a close look at the history of the manor in the parish of Thurnham, through documents, a careful examination of the landscape, and later oral history and photographs. This is a well-produced local study, complete with full notes, appendices and useful glossary, and fulfils several roles. Firstly, it is a thorough analysis of the extant sources available for the manor, although a fuller introductory section would have clarified the purpose of

putting the Court Roll entries before the more narrative sections. Secondly it looks at the old manor through the available evidence of the documentary sources and where possible, such as Henry Bedell's involvement in Jack Cade's 1450 rebellion, bringing the lives of the inhabitants to the fore. The third section on the later manor of Ware, while covering the familiar ground for local histories, undertakes the study through a careful 'perambulation' which allows the reader to get a full sense of change over time from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, bringing together the documentary and landscape evidence, with personal memories and photographic records. This is exemplified by the section on 'Church Cottages and Sharsted Way' from the initial bequest in the fifteenth century of land to the Church by John Shrested where cottages were built, to the survival of allotments on the site alongside a new development (Sharsted Way) for the elderly, maintaining the original charitable purposes of the bequest.

Kathryn Kersey has not been afraid to challenge anomalies in the documents and to ask searching questions of her evidence while providing a fascinating insight into a small manor of which many, like myself, were no doubt unaware, although I have since noticed that it is signposted off the M20. This kind of publication provides an immensely useful resource for others with an interest in the area, but because it is so thorough can also provide material for researchers in the wider region.

The study of Herne and Broomfield is a more traditional illustrated history concentrating on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although it does have a very good introductory section on the early origins and landscape, which is informed and well-researched and illustrated by a series of maps. Herne is mostly known at first acquaintance for its *Smugglers Inn*, but this study, while acknowledging the connection, commendably does not make it in any way a central focus. Rather it concentrates on themes which reflect the slow changes to this rural area through its agriculture, buildings, communications, education, commerce and finally, sport and leisure. Two of the sections in particular may be of interest to the wider readership: the building of the Coastal Road (the A299 Thanet Way) and the management of the poor from 1349 to the building of the Blean Union Workhouse after the 1834 New Poor Law and its subsequent rebranding under the NHS in 1948 as Herne Hospital.

This is very much a local study carried out by the Herne and Broomfield Local History Group and well-supported by interested subscribers. Each section is fully referenced and Mike Bundock is to be congratulated on ensuring that contributions from a large number of researchers combine to provide a coherent and readable study. The maps, plans, tables, prints and photographs are well-chosen and illustrate, but in no way dominate, the text.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS